SECRET

[redacted]

4 MAR 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Deputy Director for Plans

SUBJECT : The Chilean Congressional Election of 2 March 1969

1. According to initial reports, our congressional election operation in Chile has been successfully executed. The operation had been designed to (a) support individual, moderate candidates of the three non-Marxist political parties, (b) fund a dissident Socialist party [redacted] and (c) carry out propaganda activities against the Marxist left.

2. Ten of the twelve candidates selected for support by the field election team composed of Embassy and Station personnel were elected: [redacted] The most significant victory was that of [redacted] The dissident Socialist party (USP) elected no candidates of its own, but did poll more than 50,000 votes and thus deprived the regular, Castroite Socialist Party (PS) of about seven congressional seats. Difficult as it is to judge the effect of propaganda activities on any election, it can be said that in this instance the exploitation of the Communist Party support of the Czechoslovakian invasion cost that party votes in Santiago.

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July 2000

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3. Since the congressional election is an important benchmark for the September 1970 presidential contest, we note the following in this regard: (a) the Christian Democrats' drop to about 30 percent of the vote, losing ground to both the right and the extreme left, is a defeat for President Frei and his party; (b) the National Party's acquisition of about 20 percent of the vote represents a re-emergence of the Chilean right and another boost to the presidential candidacy of former president Jorge Alessandri; (c) the Communists did well by polling about 16 percent of the vote and, with their Socialists allies, at(2) represent about 30 percent of the electorate; and (d) the Radical Party's decline to about 12.5 percent of the vote is a setback for this perennially pivotal party and its goal to head a popular front alliance for 1970.

4. A report to the 303 Committee on our role in the election will be made as soon as we have the final field evaluation.

(Signed) William V. Broe

William V. Broe
Chief
Western Hemisphere Division

Ref: DBCI

DDP/WH [redacted] (4 March 1969)

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Page (s) 3-6

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